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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

BERRIES AND BLOSSOMS

BY MARTHA LAVINIA HOFFMAN.

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Pansy Faces.

O, the funny pansy faces,
With their odd and wise grimaces,
With their eyes so wide and staring,
And their cunning, witching ways;
O, the pretty pansy faces,
With their royal hues and graces;
Peeping from their shady places,
Through the spring and summer days.

O, the roguish pansy faces,
And the thoughtful pansy faces,
And the haughty pansy faces,
What a mingled company!
O, the purple pansy faces,
And the golden pansy faces,
And the snowy pansy faces,
What a mottled crowd are they!

How I love the pansy faces,
Smiling from their shady places;
How I love each quaint expression
And each sprightly attitude;
Ever lively, glad, and cheerful,
Never gloomy, sad or fearful,
With their merry little faces
Full of love and gratitude.

O, the jolly pansy faces,
Looking from their brimming vases,
Or, from out their shady places,
    Nodding to the butterflies.
Pansy faces shy and saucy,
Pansy faces gay and glossy,
Captivating every passer,
    By the magic of their eyes.

LILY OF THE NILE.

Queenly lily, fair and fragrant,
I have watched thy charms unroll
Till thy gold embossed scepter
Gleams against thy spotless scroll.
Stately Ethiopian princess,
From thy realm a fair exile,
Vieing with the rose in sweetness,
Queenly lily of the Nile.

Lovely in thy child-like beauty,
Yet majestic in thy pride;
Could'st thou be more sweetly gracious
Nodding by the river side?
Breath like zephyrs freshly laden
From some flower-wreathed ocean isle;
Snow-white Ethiopian maiden,
Modest lily of the Nile.

Dost thou feel no pang of longing,
Dost thou breathe no weary sigh
For thy native, orient splendor—
For thy native, sunlit sky?
Far away, thou know'st not whither,
Many, many a weary mile,
Thy fair sisters bloom and wither,
Stately lily of the Nile.

Bloom beneath the palm tree's shadow,
Just along the river's brink,
Where gay birds, with brilliant plumage,
Soar to sing, and stoop to drink.
Plucked by Egypt's dark-eyed daughters
To adorn some granite pile—
Fresher from their native waters,
Snowy lily of the Nile.

'Midst those scenes of eastern splendor
Thy ancestral race began—
Where the night of heathen darkness
Spread abroad its withering ban.
Yet no spot of man's transgressing
Could thy purity defile,
Looking heavenward for each blessing,
Saintly lily of the Nile.

Did they view thy purer glory
With their darkened minds unawed?
Did they learn of thee no lesson
Of the power and love of God?
Like a spotless, white-winged angel
Sent to them untouched by guile,
Did they spurn thy glad evangel,
Spotless lily of the Nile?

O, could they have looked from Nature
Unto Nature's God alone,
Would they not have scorned to worship
Images of wood and stone?
Would they not, thy beauty seeing,
Have looked up in faith erewhile
To the God who gave thee being,
Matchless lily of the Nile?

BERRIES.

Berries! berries! beautiful berries!
Wearing a charm ever pleasing and new;
Daintiest food, fit for elfins and fairies,
Born of the sunshine, the breeze, and the dew.

Drooping in delicate sprays of repleteness;
Nestling in green leaves, half hidden from sight;
Hanging in rich, juicy globules of sweetness;
Peeping up shyly to drink in the light.

Perched on a twig is a saucy, red linnet;
Beak dyed with carmine, betraying his theft;
While birds of all colors, each sunshiny minute,
Feast on the bounties his majesty left.

Lazuli finches and golden canaries,
Hither and thither in ecstasy fly,
Warbling, in unison, "Berries! ripe berries!"
What ruby wine with their nectar can vie!

Laughing-eyed children, with lips dyed vermillion,
And finger-tips stained, the sweet secret have guessed;
And honey-bees, joining the merry cotillion,
Meet with the birds at their lavish repast.

Berries! berries! bright, luscious berries!
Ripening and melting the long summer through;
No sheaf-laden Ceres such tempting spoil carries;
Born of the sunshine, the breeze, and the dew.

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